



Citoyenneté et  
Immigration Canada

Citizenship and  
Immigration Canada



# FOCUS

Integration • Inclusion

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For a fair and welcoming French-language community in Ontario

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**La Passerelle** is a nonprofit organization  
created to respond to the integration and  
economic development needs of young  
Francophones from the various cultural  
communities of Greater Toronto. Founded  
in 1993, La Passerelle is recognized within  
the French-speaking community for its  
leadership and its stand on issues and  
matters affecting its clientele.

To consult calls for proposals issued by  
**Citizenship and Immigration Canada**,  
Settlement Directorate, Ontario Region,  
visit [www.etablissement.org](http://www.etablissement.org).

# About ... FOCUS

Francophone immigration to Ontario has never generated so much attention, discussion and action as in the past five years. This newsletter will provide a much needed forum for sharing information about the latest trends and issues, policies and plans, challenges and successes pertaining to Francophone immigration.

We at Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Ontario Region, are pleased with and proud of the initiatives underway in French-speaking Ontario. As a number of studies have pointed out, including the *Framework* and the *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*, investing in the development and implementation of projects or programs designed to attract and integrate immigrants in French-speaking communities in Ontario is very important. We believe that these investments will have a positive impact, generating economic, cultural, social, and demographic spin-offs for Francophone minority communities.

If the many calls for proposals have resulted in the realization of a large number of projects, this is largely thanks to the commitment, cooperation and conviction of the members of the Sub-Committee for Francophone Minority Communities. Working in partnership, key stakeholders, namely community organizations, federal and provincial departments, as well as representatives of the Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee for Francophone Minority Communities, share a common desire to achieve progress together. The Sub-Committee is the principal resource in Ontario in matters of Francophone immigration; being up to date on everything that goes on is a responsibility that it takes very seriously.

By bringing together different experiences and perspectives, the Sub-Committee is enabling us to stay focused on the priority needs defined by the five objectives of the *Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*. Programs and projects are in direct response to these objectives; they focus on recruiting a larger number of French-speaking immigrants, improving settlement programs, providing helpful information on Canadian living, economic integration, and raising awareness of the benefits of immigration.

We invite you to browse through this publication and discover the many facets of immigration to French Ontario.

**Wilma Jenkins**

**Settlement and Intergovernmental Affairs**  
Ontario Region  
Citizenship and Immigration Canada



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## Immigration: an essential condition for the vitality of French-speaking communities

Immigration has played and continues to play an important role in Canada's economic growth, social development, and cultural enrichment. Since 1970, our country has welcomed on average 200,000 immigrants per year.

Recent studies reveal, however, that immigration has benefited Francophone minority communities much less than it has the English-speaking population. In fact, the Francophone community's demographic weight has actually declined, mainly a result of low birth rates, migration to large cities, ageing and assimilation.

In the face of such decline, the *Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne* (FCFA) of Canada launched the Dialogue tour, which spurred Francophone minority communities to seriously consider their future. In the end, they concluded that immigration is an essential condition for their continued development, growth, and vitality.

This newfound awareness led to the creation of the Citizenship and Immigration Canada-Francophone Minority Communities Steering Committee. Its mandate, adopted in March 2002, is twofold: to formulate strategies designed to increase the number of French-speaking immigrants into Francophone minority communities, and to strengthen settlement and integration structures for newcomers.

### Ontario

**Major milestones have been achieved across the province.**

In 2003, the Citizenship and Immigration Canada Settlement and Intergovernmental Affairs Directorate (Ontario Region) created the Sub-Committee for Francophone Minority Communities. Now seen as the focal point for Francophone immigration issues in Ontario, the Sub-Committee is responsible for maintaining collaboration between key partners, such as federal and provincial departments and ministries, as well as French-speaking communities.

Members of the Sub-Committee meet at least four (4) times a year. Together, they examine issues, share the latest information, and explore initiatives that address the specific needs of the different regions of Ontario. At a strategic retreat in March 2007, the Sub-Committee articulated its vision, which now reads as follows: *Ontario seeks to be the leader in the integration and settlement of Francophone immigrants in minority communities in Canada.*

*Given the fact that immigration is an important factor in the growth of Canada's population, it should benefit the country's two linguistic communities equally. Measures should be developed to help the Francophone and Acadian communities profit more from immigration to mitigate their demographic decline. They would benefit from the economic and cultural spin-offs of the arrival of immigrants in their communities and make up for lost time.<sup>1</sup>*

1. From the Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, 2003

The Sub-Committee has identified five priority areas requiring action in the next five years:

- **promotion and recruitment** geared toward making Ontario a destination of choice for potential French-speaking immigrants;
- **economic integration** to ensure immigrants find gainful employment in their areas of expertise;
- **regionalized service integration**, so that newcomers can be welcomed, informed, and served in French in one location (one-stop shop for all services);
- **respect for language rights**, to ensure immigrants are granted access to services in French;
- **an inclusive French-speaking community**, which means ensuring the French-speaking population is made aware of the benefits of immigration and remains open to it.



### Role of representatives of the different partners:

#### Citizenship and Immigration Canada-Ontario Region:

- Chairs the Sub-Committee
- Facilitates interdepartmental dialogue
- Develops interdepartmental plans of action
- Coordinates communication between members

#### Steering Committee:

- Represents the needs and realities of the regions
- Ensures liaison between the Steering Committee and the Sub-Committee

#### Departments and Ministries (federal and provincial):

- Give a departmental perspective on the realities, problems, and opportunities
- Create and develop projects / initiatives that meet identified needs
- Keep projects up to date
- Fund projects and initiatives

#### Communities:

- Provide a perspective on realities, problems, and opportunities according to their respective regions and sectors
- Recommend projects / initiatives that meet identified needs
- Keep up to date on local issues and report on them



**Immigration:** an essential condition for the vitality of French-speaking communities *cont.***Deeply Committed**

Members of the Sub-Committee fully recognize the complexity of immigration issues. They know all too well that there are many miles to go before their work is done. For this reason, they remain firmly committed to forging ahead. In fact, they see their work in the Sub-Committee as a ripple effect – the good work that is being done is leading to more good work at the grassroots level, all of which contributes to positive change.

### Members of the Sub-Committee for Francophone Minority Communities – Ontario Region:

**Citizenship and Immigration Canada**

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**Union provinciale des minorités raciales et ethnoculturelles francophones (UP des MREF)**

Séverin Ndema-Moussa

## Objectives identified in the Strategic Framework<sup>2</sup> :

<sup>2</sup> From the Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, 2003

- Objective 1** } Increase the number of French-speaking immigrants to give more demographic weight to Francophone minority communities
- Objective 2** } Improve the capacity of Francophone minority communities to receive Francophone newcomers and to strengthen their reception and settlement infrastructures
- Objective 3** } Ensure the economic integration of French-speaking immigrants into Canadian society and into Francophone minority communities in particular
- Objective 4** } Ensure the social and cultural integration of French-speaking immigrants into Canadian society and into Francophone minority communities
- Objective 5** } Foster regionalization of Francophone immigration outside Toronto and Vancouver



# Promotion and Recruitment

## The starting point for successful immigration

Canada has benefited greatly from immigration in recent decades. In fact, immigration continues to play a decisive role in our country's economic, social and cultural growth.

As revealed in a series of studies published in 2002 by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, Francophone minority communities have not benefited from immigration to the same extent as Canada's English-speaking population.

According to the 2001 census, 75 percent of French-speaking immigrants chose to settle in Quebec. In proportional terms, Francophones living outside Quebec represent 4.4 percent of the Canadian population. Only 3.1 percent of new immigrants outside Quebec speak French.

To bridge the gap, the Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee for Francophone Minority Communities has set out five objectives, the first of which aims to increase the number of French-speaking immigrants. This will help Francophone minority communities gain greater demographic weight.

The target is to achieve at least 4.4 percent, a figure that corresponds exactly to the percentage of French-speaking Canadians living outside Quebec.

### Showcasing French-speaking Communities

In matters of recruitment, the biggest challenge Ontario's French-speaking communities face is positioning themselves as a destination of choice to prospective French-speaking immigrants.

In order to do this, they need to highlight their advantages. For instance, they have to show that they have a dynamic, thriving milieu, rich in culture, with a strong French-language infrastructure in health care and education.

Communities also need to emphasize their openness and their desire to welcome and integrate immigrants by demonstrating their actual capacity to do so. That means promoting the services and programs they have set up specifically for the benefit of immigrants. These can include orientation services, support, guidance and matching programs, employment and housing assistance, remedial English courses, and others.

### Innovative Approaches

In recent years, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and its partners have developed innovative approaches to overseas recruitment and promotion of Francophone minority communities. Here are a few examples:

- Promotional tours in Europe and Africa by sector and community representatives of participating provinces and territories. These missions helped establish ties with prospective immigrants, providing them with accurate, realistic information about living, working, and studying in a Francophone minority setting.

- Preparing immigrants ahead of time for the immigration process and available sources of information that would facilitate their integration. One example is the [immigrationontario.ca](http://immigrationontario.ca) site. It provides a wealth of practical information about the whole process for each category of immigrants. It covers key aspects of

life in Canada—climate, population, linguistic duality, economy, health care, education and much more—in addition to providing tips on how to prepare for a new life.

### Initiative: Destination Canada - Europe

In November 2007, a delegation of representatives from different provinces and the Yukon as well as the health care and education sectors organized a promotional tour in Europe, more specifically in France and Belgium. Equipped with information booths and promotional tools, representatives disseminated information to prospective immigrants.

Ontario community representatives included Saint-Phard Désir, Eastern Ontario Region Network Coordinator, and Léonie Tchatat, Executive Director of La Passerelle.



La Passerelle, in conjunction with Collège Boréal, produced a brochure promoting the French-speaking communities of Windsor, Hamilton, London, Sudbury, Ottawa, and Toronto. The stand-up-and-take-notice tool sketches a profile of the population and addresses such key issues as education, living in French, and the job market. Essential contact information for each city—welcome services, employment services, adult education and schooling for children—is also provided.

*The FMCs (Francophone minority communities) that are interested in fostering immigration to their communities must identify themselves and establish the necessary partnerships and collaborative relationships. There are greater chances of success when a group of organizations invests in the process and creates a kind of catalyst for the integration of French-speaking immigrants.<sup>1</sup>*

1 From the Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, 2006

*An assessment of the capacity of Francophone minority communities to receive newcomers demonstrates that first contacts with the host society and its institutions are decisive in the ongoing integration of immigrants. The study showed that the Francophone and Acadian communities have little experience in receiving and integrating immigrants. (...)*<sup>1</sup>

*It is thus necessary to improve the reception structures for French-speaking newcomers and to make all members of Francophone minority communities aware of the positive spin-offs of immigration. This would create a social and cultural climate that would facilitate the integration of Francophone newcomers.*<sup>2</sup>

1 PRA inc., Evaluation of the ability of minority francophone communities to host newcomers 2002.

2 From the Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, 2003



# Francophone Communities:

## Integration and Awareness

### Welcoming immigrants: the key to success

Integrating newcomers poses significant challenges, but for Francophone minority communities, the benefits of immigration are undeniable. As the Co-Chair of the Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee for Francophone Minority Communities, Marc Arnal, pointed out before the Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages in February 2003: "Opening up [...] communities to newcomers [...] makes it possible to [...]:

- ▶ recruit qualified workers and expertise in sectors such as health and education, which are crucial to the development of our communities;
- ▶ secure greater recognition for our communities within the international *Francophonie*;
- ▶ discover new ways of doing things while respecting our differences in the context of greater cultural diversity;
- ▶ and strengthen Francophone institutions in Canada, in particular by increasing the enrolment numbers of French-language teaching establishments."

### Facilitating Integration

The needs of French-speaking immigrants are varied. As soon as they arrive in Ontario, they must find a place to live, deal with various administrative formalities, and fill out the many forms that will allow them to obtain a social insurance card, health care card, and other identification; they also have to find a job, enroll their children in a school, locate resources such as a medical or legal clinic... and the list goes on and on. In addition, the majority of them must take English courses, which explains why the availability of welcoming services in the French language is so important.

For this reason, a number of organizations have now been designated to assist them. In Ottawa as in Sudbury, Windsor, London, Hamilton, and Toronto, such organizations steer French-speaking immigrants through channels or refer them to appropriate resources, in addition to providing advice and support. These welcome and settlement organizations are the immigrants' gateway to their host community.

### The Openness of Host Communities

It is crucial for French-speaking communities to understand the many ways in which immigration can benefit them. For example, immigration can help them maintain or even increase their demographic weight. It can help fuel economic prosperity or recovery, and enrich their cultural heritage. It is also an effective way of injecting much-needed new blood and talent in waning communities.

That is why it is so important for communities to open their arms and invest in the integration of immigrants. Creating and maintaining front-line structures specifically designed to welcome new immigrants to French Ontario is key to a successful integration. Communities now have every reason to want to take on the challenges of integration.

### Expected Results

Integration is unquestionably a two-way process. For newcomers, it's a commitment to start living a new life in Ontario; for host communities, it means facilitating the integration of new immigrants.



The potential gains that can be derived from this process are described in the *Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*:

- establishment of reception and settlement structures adapted to the Francophone community's social and demographic reality and immigration level;
- a French-speaking community that is aware of the richness of cultural diversity and of the importance of receiving newcomers.

#### Overview of Current Initiatives

- The project *Compétences Culturelles – sensibilisation du secteur francophone à l'immigration et à la diversité* (Cultural competences – raising awareness of immigration and diversity in the Francophone sector) is managed by La Passerelle. With the help of various tools and workshops, the organization is building awareness of immigration and rallying Francophone organizations, including French-speaking ethnocultural racial minorities, across French Ontario on the issue of immigration. The idea behind this effort is to bring minorities and host communities to work closer together on the basis of acceptance, tolerance, and mutual respect. As a result, they will be better equipped to welcome and integrate newcomers.

In early 2007, a committee of champions was created to advise and guide project leaders. This committee is made up of 11 French-

speaking members representing various key sectors in Ontario: education, health care, grassroots, the media, and business.

Several initiatives have been carried out to date, including a comprehensive search to identify models of cultural competence within the English-speaking and French-speaking communities outside Quebec. Efforts in this area have as yet not yielded any results.

In drawing up the workshop curriculum, three focus groups were held in Ottawa, Toronto and Sudbury. These focus groups helped identify the needs of organizations and best practices, and clarify various issues linked to cultural competences.

The first cultural competence awareness workshop took place in Ottawa as part of the Symposium on Official Languages on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007. It was a great success thanks in large part to lecturer Maryse Bermingham and panelists Jean-Gilles Pelletier and Jasmine Thibeault from Toronto's Centre francophone, Claude Bergeron from *La Cité collégiale*, and Louise Sauvé-Dubois from Canadian Heritage.

The next stage in the project involves conducting a survey of French-speaking organizations and institutions in various sectors of the province. The goal: to identify their particular needs in terms of training and raising awareness of cultural competences before the launch of the cultural competence training campaign in Ontario.

- In January 2007, a one-stop shop was set up at the London-Sarnia ACFO, a French-language advocacy group, in conjunction with a new immigrant settlement and adaptation program. It provides customized services and assistance with settlement, employment, orientation, and counselling. Clients, some of whom have great needs, use it for help with finding housing or enrolling children in school. The new resource was made possible thanks to close collaboration between the London-Sarnia ACFO and many other organizations, including Collège Boréal and the London Economic Development Corporation.

- The development of the web site [www.établissement.org](http://www.établissement.org) is financed since 2005 by the Office of Francophone Affairs and Canadian Heritage under the Canada – Ontario Agreement. In 2006-07, OCASI also received funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada. In coming years, the three ministries will continue to finance the development of web content for [www.établissement.org](http://www.établissement.org) including its promotion and its ability to do work collaboratively with organizations and the Francophone community of Ontario.



# Economy - Jobs - Recognition

## Improving the employability of French-speaking immigrants

According to the 2001 census data, 40 percent of immigrants coming to Canada hold university degrees, compared to 22 percent of Canadians. This observation gives rise to two questions: why are immigrants less successful, and why do six immigrants out of ten have to take jobs below their level of expertise?

Since the beginning of the decade, many have expressed concern over these findings. It is estimated that failure to recognize foreign credentials and the underemployment of immigrants represents losses of 3.4 to 5 billion dollars in earnings. In the study *Les travailleurs formés à l'étranger : séduction et abandon* (Workers with foreign training: enticed and abandoned - available only in French), published in 2003, author François Lamontagne of the Canadian Labour and Business Centre noted serious problems in the way immigrants are adapting:

"New Canadians, especially those who have come to the country recently, face tremendous difficulty finding jobs, and the situation appears to be deteriorating [...] [while] new Canadians with university degrees are overrepresented in jobs requiring low skill levels."

This poses a serious challenge to the developers of the Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities. They note that French-speaking immigrants are also affected by the poor economic prospects faced by all newcomers.

But what is keeping Canadian companies from hiring qualified immigrants and utilizing their full potential? According to *EmbauchImmigrants.ca*, a web site funded by the Government of Canada and the Maytree Foundation, there are many reasons.

"...some are systemic, some are deep-rooted in habit; some are accidental. Very few are intentional. However, they exist, and while employers often see aspects of hiring immigrants as being challenges, they may also be seen as opportunities."

### From Dream to Reality

At first, French-speaking immigrant professionals settling in a Francophone minority community believe that it will be relatively easy for them to integrate. After

all, they tell

*"Economic integration challenges often go hand in hand with social integration challenges. It is difficult to find a job without a network of contacts and without knowledge of the host society's values and customs. Conversely, it is difficult to integrate socially if one's basic economic needs have not been met."*

*In addition to the problems relating to foreign credential recognition, weak or non-existent English language skills are at the root of many of the problems French-speaking immigrants encounter while looking for employment."*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From the Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, 2006

themselves, they speak French and their training and experience will be seen as an asset by employers.

But the reality is often, too often, very different from their dreams. First of all, they discover that knowledge, or even proficiency in the English language is not just an asset, but a must-have in order to gain access to the labour market. Then there is the long, tortuous process of having one's professional but foreign credentials recognized.

Without Canadian experience and a good knowledge of the labour market, including the job search process, the new immigrant professional faces an uphill battle.





The obstacles in his way have a direct impact on his capacity to adapt to his new living environment.

*"When asked to consider the needs they are likely to have in the next 2-3 years, nearly all newcomers said, 'I need a good job.' When pressed further, many indicated that guidance around long-term decisions and activities would be useful, including long-term financial and education advice, advice about employment trends, additional language skills, housing advice, and the creation and maintenance of social networks."*

From Consultations on the Settlement and Language Training Services Needs of Newcomers, September 2006, prepared by InterQuest Consulting, commissioned by Citizenship and Immigration Canada

From all indications, a major challenge for Canada is to improve the employability of immigrants. Many people are currently working hard on this, because it is urgent to find ways to make the process of recognizing foreign credentials fairer and more efficient. We also have to do a better job of preparing immigrants to gain entry into the Canadian labour market. Employers must be made to see the untapped value of the unemployed and underemployed talents of immigrants.

### Current Initiatives

Transforming challenges into opportunities, ensuring that immigrants find what they are looking for, and bringing new prosperity to French-speaking Ontario by putting all this underemployed intellectual, cultural and social capital to work—these are the goals of projects and initiatives now underway.

Collège Boréal's Destination Profession Program, launched in Hamilton and Toronto last July, is a good example. With over 30 weeks of interdisciplinary training, French-speaking immigrants who have acquired vocational

training abroad are trained and equipped to find and maintain gainful employment in their field of expertise. They also take courses in English to become more proficient in the language of their trade or profession, as well as other courses to familiarize themselves with the Canadian workplace and job requirements. Support is also provided throughout the recognition process.

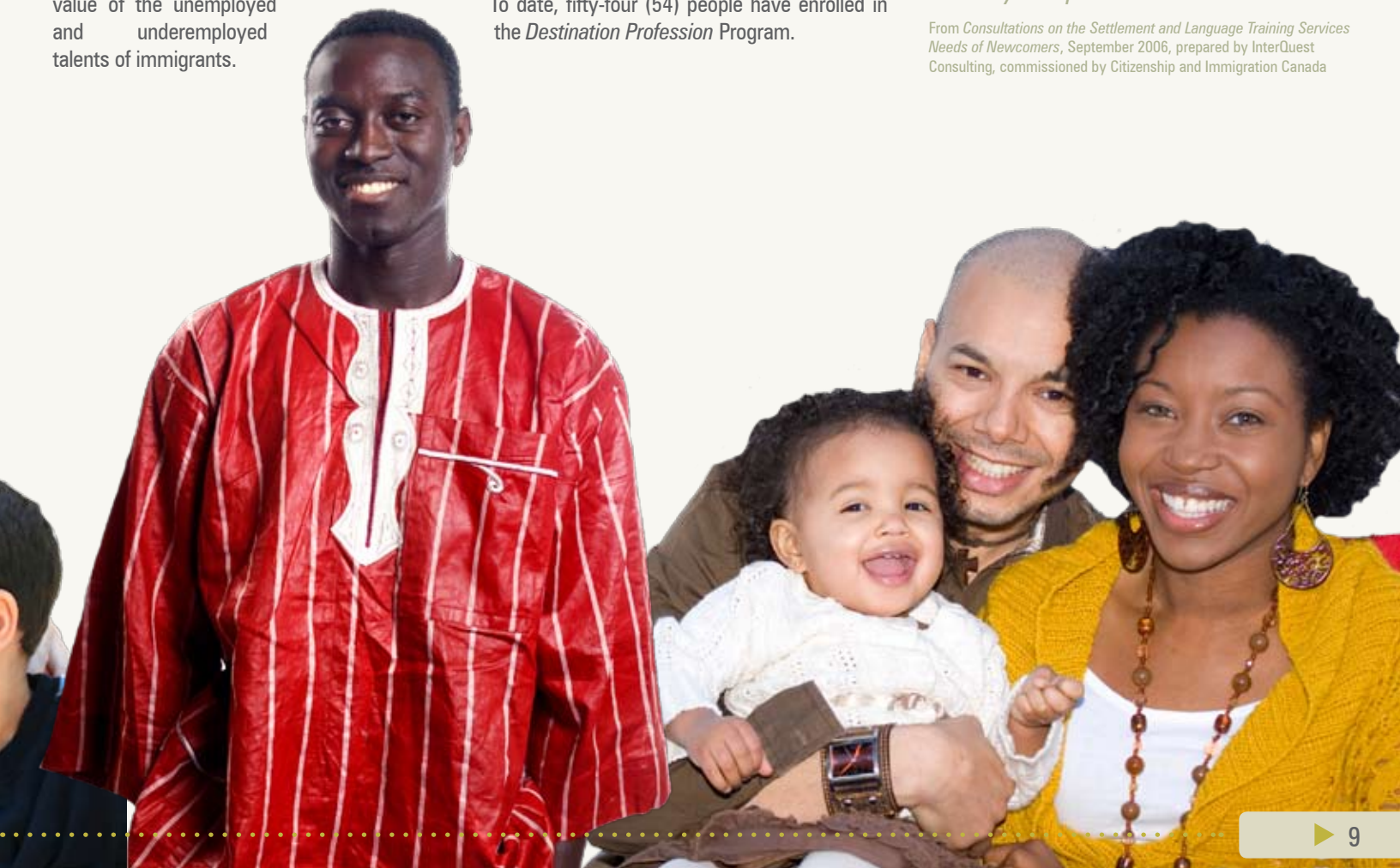
To date, fifty-four (54) people have enrolled in the Destination Profession Program.

Collège Boréal also offers workplace-oriented English courses for French-speaking newcomers in Toronto, Hamilton, London, Mississauga, Windsor, and Welland. Thanks to this training, some eighty (80) immigrants have improved their English language skills. Solely on the basis of testimonials received from immigrant students who have found jobs after taking the course, it can be said that this kind of initiative is highly beneficial.

The courses will be offered again in January 2008.

*"Education and awareness programs are needed to address employers' unwillingness to recognize professional status and foreign experience as well as employers' ignorance and biases about newcomers' assets and potential contribution to the work place and the Canadian economy. Targeted education programs are also needed to raise awareness around ethnic and racial biases and to introduce sensitivities to cultural diversity into places of work."*

From Consultations on the Settlement and Language Training Services Needs of Newcomers, September 2006, prepared by InterQuest Consulting, commissioned by Citizenship and Immigration Canada



# Regionalization

## Immigration to the regions: challenges and opportunities

According to 2001 Census data, 80 percent of French-speaking immigrants who settle outside Québec opted to do so in Toronto and Vancouver.

The *Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities* attempts to remedy this situation with one of its five objectives focused on achieving a more balanced distribution of French-speaking immigrants outside the two major urban centers.

The question is, how can Francophone communities in Sudbury, Ottawa, London, Windsor, and Hamilton attract, integrate, and retain French-speaking immigrants in a context where the economy is slowing down or shifting gears, and, in some cases, the population is in decline?

There are possible solutions, some of which can be found in a March 2004 report prepared by Ronald Bisson and Associates entitled *Établissement d'un guichet unique pour l'accueil des personnes immigrantes et réfugiées de langue française à Sudbury (Towards the Creation of a One-stop Shop for Welcoming Francophone Immigrants and Refugees in Sudbury - available only in French)*. The same firm conducted a similar study the previous year for the London-Sarnia area.

Both studies point out that droves of French-speaking immigrants should not be expected to settle outside Toronto and Ottawa, particularly in more remote areas. Between 1991 and 2001 for example, Sudbury welcomed only ten new immigrants a year on average. In the London-Sarnia area, the figure is 50 to 80 immigrants a year over the same period.

However, the studies conclude that implementing well-designed strategies could improve this picture significantly. In fact, it would be realistic to aim for the settlement of 50 to 100 new French-speaking immigrant families per year in London-Sarnia, and up to 300 families in Sudbury over 10 years.

### Setting Up Networks

In order to attract French-speaking immigrants to Ontario Francophone communities, the *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities* gives high priority to setting up and supporting local networks.

The plan is to build networks of champions that would support implementation of the Strategic Plan locally and regionally. Their main task would be to communicate what is being done and what is happening on the ground, assess needs, and suggest ways of achieving objectives. And to do this, they must act as go-betweens, facilitating cooperation among organizations working on the issue of immigration in a minority language setting.

Last spring, a call for proposals was issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada – Ontario Region for the creation of three networks: one in Eastern Ontario, another in Southwestern Ontario, and a third in Northern Ontario.

Two of the networks have already been set up: the Central and Southwestern Network, which is managed by the *Centre de santé Hamilton/Niagara*, and the Eastern Network, which is coordinated by the *Conseil économique et social d'Ottawa-Carleton (CESOC)*. *Contact interculturel francophone de Sudbury*, with support from *Collège Boréal*, was recently chosen to set up the Northern Network.

Regionalization of immigration outside Toronto presents challenges for French-speaking communities in Sudbury, London, Windsor, Hamilton, and Ottawa. But there is clearly a need for such communities to embark on a regionalization initiative; the opportunities that it presents are well





*The FMCs (Francophone minority communities) that are interested in fostering immigration to their communities must identify themselves and establish the necessary partnerships and collaborative relationships. There are greater chances of success when a group of organizations invests in the process and creates a kind of catalyst for the integration of French-speaking immigrants. Several organizations can play a lead role in such a group.<sup>1</sup>*

1 From the Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, 2006

known. Much more needs to be done to raise the number of French-speaking immigrants outside major urban centres.

### A Good Start

#### ► The Eastern Network,

in conjunction with local stakeholders, is currently defining its role and priorities for the coming year. To expedite the process, it organized a forum that brought together more than forty organizations in Ottawa on May 2 and 3. Saint-Phard Désir is Network Coordinator.

#### ► The Central and Southwestern Network

is taking stock of the situation by meeting with organizations involved in the area of immigration. The Coordinator, Alain Dobi, has organized community forums to get stakeholders together.

#### ► The Northern Network

is in the initial stages of laying the groundwork, and recently hired a Coordinator, Hélène Kouadio.

## Helpful Links

- The new Citizenship and Immigration Canada website: [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)  
The site has undergone a major overhaul in order to facilitate searching for information and services.
- The Government of Ontario website, which provides important information for new immigrants – before and after they arrive in Ontario:  
[www.ontarioimmigration.ca/index.asp](http://www.ontarioimmigration.ca/index.asp)
- The [etablissement.org](http://etablissement.org) website, which provides information and resources for immigrants to Ontario.
- The Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, November 2003 : <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/settlement/framework-minorities.asp>
- Strategic Plan To Foster Immigration To Francophone Minority Communities, September 2006: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/settlement/plan-minorities.asp>
- *Le Réseau de la région de l'Est de l'Ontario*:  
[www.cesoc.ca/fr/reseau.htm](http://www.cesoc.ca/fr/reseau.htm)
- *Le Réseau de la région du Centre Sud-Ouest*:  
[www.centredeantecommunautaire.com/Reseau.htm](http://www.centredeantecommunautaire.com/Reseau.htm)
- Employment activities and French training calendar in Toronto  
<http://www.poss.ca/fr/calendrier>



## Did you know?

"The federal government and the Province of Ontario finalized the first Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement in 2005. This framework agreement will address the full range of integration needs, including basic settlement services and language training."

From the 2006 edition of the *Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration* by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

"(...)The new investment of \$920 million over five years will significantly enhance the capacity of service providers in the settlement and language training sectors to meet the current and emerging needs of newcomers more effectively."

From the *Strategic Plan for Settlement and Language Training*, 2007

"The main needs of newcomers fell into nine primary areas: the need for better information and guidance; employment; language and education; initial orientation; financial stability; cultural integration; social and emotional support; health; and housing.

The top three needs of newcomers are employment, language, and better information and guidance."

From *Consultations on the Settlement and Language Training Services Needs of Newcomers*, September 2006, prepared by InterQuest Consulting, commissioned by Citizenship and Immigration Canada



# Testimonial

## Maxim Jean-Louis



It is an honour and a privilege for me to be a member of the *Steering Committee of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)-Francophone Minority Communities*

since its inception in the spring of 2002, and a member of the Sub-Committee for Ontario.

I have witnessed the remarkable progress achieved by this Committee, as much in the setting up of structures to welcome French-speaking newcomers into our communities as in the ability to foster positive change in attitudes toward immigration and immigrants.

Francophone immigration into minority language settings is not a new phenomenon. Many of us have had the experience ourselves, going back decades. Yet prior to the Dialogue initiative of the *Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne* (FCFA) of Canada, in 2001, people rarely spoke about it.

While we were generally very pleased to see French-speaking immigrants settle into our midst, enroll their children in French-language schools, and become engaged in the economy and the life of the community, little support was provided to help integrate them fully as compared to the resources available in the communities where English is the predominant language.

The situation was even worse for those with refugee status who arrived in Ontario totally bereft of resources. They had to rely on English-language settlement and integration support services in a country that had been described to them as being officially bilingual.

Five years later, we are supported in Ontario by an efficient structure with strong CIC backing, whose annual funding has just been substantially increased. The Sub-Committee for Ontario has created key partnerships with several Ontario ministries, including the ministries of Education and Citizenship and Immigration, and the Office of Francophone Affairs, and also secured commitments from federal departments such as Canadian Heritage, Industry Canada, and FedNor.

Important community organizations, such as the *Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario* and the *Union provinciale des minorités raciales et ethnoculturelles francophones*, have also entered into strategic partnerships. Moreover, the Sub-Committee has established three regional networks for settling newcomers in Eastern, Southwestern, and Northern Ontario, all of which work closely with other agencies.

In that regard, I would also like to note the very successful forum organized by the Eastern Ontario Network. Hosted by the *Conseil économique et social d'Ottawa-Carleton*, the forum participants sought to identify measures that could be taken to welcome, integrate, and retain French-speaking immigrants in the region. This initiative was undertaken after extensive consultations with some 50 organizations from the area and the creation of three local committees in Ottawa, Cornwall, and Kingston.

This event occurred in the wake of the *Consortium économique de Toronto pour nouveaux arrivants francophones*, held the previous year, which had brought together some 15 immigrant community organizations. The Sub-Committee is now preparing to follow up on this activity.

But all of this is not the result of serendipity. These developments and initiatives required the commitment of CIC officials in Ontario, including

the Director, Settlement and Intergovernmental Affairs, Wilma Jenkins, as well as her colleagues Darlyn Mentor and Irena Nikolova, with whom it is always an immense pleasure to work within the Sub-Committee for Ontario Region.

These achievements are also the result of the strong leadership shown by immigrant associations themselves and the support of numerous community organizations across the province, including the *Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario* and the *Union provinciale des minorités raciales et ethnoculturelles francophones*.

Great strides have been made, but much more work remains to be done. And if the path we have followed in the last five years is any indication of what we can accomplish together, we are headed in the right direction.

### Maxim Jean-Louis Member

National Committee of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)-Francophone Minority Communities and Steering Sub-Committee for Ontario